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ABSTRACT

This pamphlet brings together information about the service-learning model, offers sequential steps that colleges and universities can take to implement or expand public-need-based learning, and itemizes some tools for program management. Steps to develop a public-need-based-service learning program consider the development of conceptual clarity, administration of programs from college or university base, necessary elements of negotiation with community groups or public agencies, conduct of the program, and follow-up. Related documents are HE 004 967 and HE 004 966. (MJM)

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SERVICE-LEARNING

STEPS ALONG THE WAY

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A COLLEGE PERSPECTIVE

HE 004 969

FOREWORD

Service-learning internships provide educational opportunities for students in experiential settings of public and human need. In North Carolina they have been a part of higher educational opportunities since summer 1969.

The service-learning internship model can be organized and initiated from many bases. It can work equally well in conjunction with voluntary organizations, businesses, community groups, or any other agency interested in promoting the public good and in contributing to the growth of young people. Some current programs of student involvement, such as the Neighborhood Youth Corps, College Work/Study Program, and Youth Conservation Corps, have readily compatible frameworks for infusing the service-learning concept.

The benefits of service-learning to the involved parties are numerous, but a basic list should include these findings:

Service-learning internships offer students:

personal responsibility for meeting a public need;

independence to pursue personally determined learning objectives;

a chance to practice a service-learning life style;

aid in developing the capacity to make sense of experience;

perspective to reflect on cultural values and ones own commitment to values;

better understanding of institutional behavior and organization;

opportunity to explore vocational interests; and

context for developing some specific skills.

Service-learning internships offer colleges:

additional learning settings for students;

opportunities to serve specific public and human needs;

awareness of immediate situations in communities from which students come and to which they will return;

opportunities to keep abreast of new knowledge being generated in communities and non-academic settings; and

opportunities for establishing a continuing dialogue among students and faculty about living and learning.

Service-learning internships offer organizations:

an immediate source of manpower;

contacts and access to skills and knowledge of colleges and universities;

opportunities to examine the learning and teaching dimensions of their own operation;

opportunities for supervisors of interns to discover ways to manage work and learning for themselves as well as for interns;

screening and recruitment of future employees;

access to thoughts and attitudes of the young (ventilation); and

fostering of creditable witnesses (interns and faculty) about the nature and worth of the organization in promoting the public good.

This pamphlet brings together information about the service-learning model, offers sequential steps that colleges and universities can take to implement or expand public-need-based learning, and itemizes some "tools" for program management. The notes from which this paper was conceived grew from three years of research into what has been learned in previous internships and what has supported this learning. Students, faculty, and internship brokers around the state have contributed to the insights set forth. The North Carolina Internship Office has compiled this information and is available to assist further those interested in using the service-learning model. NCIO is housed at 116 West Jones Street, Raleigh, N. C. 27603.

NCIO Staff

April 1, 1972

PUBLIC-NEED-BASED LEARNING FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS:

A SERVICE-LEARNING INTERNSHIP MODEL

The Southern Regional Education Board defines "service-learning" as "the integration of the accomplishment of a needed task with educational growth." A more detailed characterization was offered in 1970 by a former student intern Noel Dunivant:

> The primary goal of the service-learning concept is providing the opportunities wherein a service life style can be nurtured.... The second priority... is the development of ability to learn from experience. A third priority is to offer each person the opportunity to learn about human nature, about cultural values and about his personal commitments to such values.

Public needs offer both specific project tasks and specific learning opportunities. From spring 1969 to fall 1971 the North Carolina Internship Office (NCIO) has assisted the formulation of 1,000 service-learning internships. The service-learning internship model is built upon seven principles:

1. That each service-learning intern have at least one well-defined work activity that is regarded as worthwhile by the organization or group with whom the intern is affiliated, the intern, and the faculty mentor. Does the task have a sense of human importance to it?

2. That each service-learning intern develop specific learning objectives that can be readily identified and reviewed periodically throughout the work period. The support committee members, faculty and agency representatives, should also develop specific learning objectives for their participation in the experience.

3. That each intern or group of interns be supported by a college related faculty person and/or a community or public organization person. The roles of these support people are to assist with task definition, learning objective definition, carrying out the task, counseling with the intern, carrying through with ideas and projects initiated.

4. That each intern contract as an independent agent with the organization involved to do the work and pursue the learning objectives.

5. That each intern have adequate time for private reflection time to assess the worth of his own experience in providing service to others and learning in a non-school setting.

6. That each intern produce a report or communication vehicle that is primarily produced for the organization affiliated with and the people being served. Such a product should also be illustrative of the learning realized through the experience.

7. That where possible, regular workshops or meetings be arranged and required to make possible student-to-student feedback and accountability. A Learning Team of 10-15 students meeting regularly (weekly) with supportive mentors is a proven and workable model for encouraging peer group learning and support.

SOME STEPS ALONG THE WAY IN DEVELOPING A PUBLIC-NEED-BASED SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM: A COLLEGE PERSPECTIVE

STEP I. DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTUAL CLARITY.

Determine priority goals for your program knowingly. There are many options, not mutually exclusive, such as:

1. Experiential learning in a public need context (service-learning).
2. Public problem-solving.
3. Youth manpower for agencies.
4. Career exposure and professional recruitment.
5. College-community relationship building.
6. Financial aid assistance for student.
7. Curriculum reform.
8. Student development in citizenship awareness.

STEP II. ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM(S) FROM COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY BASE.

1. Be sure that one person at the college is identified as having responsibility for each program and as being the source of information and arrangements. Some institutions may want to coordinate a variety of programs through an off-campus learning office staffed with an internship broker. (See Example 1.)
2. Before proceeding very far with program development, be sure there is an adequate administrative framework (phones, typists, duplicating equipment, adequate staff time, operating funds).
3. Determine strategies and tactics in each program for the following:
   a. Category of student for which program is designed.
   b. Time frame for student involvement.
   c. Best student recruitment/selection process. (See Example 2.)
   d. Best setting for learning and doing.
   e. Basic terms and conditions for student, college, and participating agency regarding accident responsibility, disciplinary action, etc.
   f. Financial commitments, pay procedure.

g. Rights to work product and work by-products of student interns (e.g., research, reports, opinions, criticisms).

h. Evaluation and grading, especially where academic credit is involved.

i. Responsibility for incidental living arrangements.

STEP III. NEGOTIATION WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS OR PUBLIC AGENCIES: NECESSARY ELEMENTS.

1. Provide written and/or oral material on the basic goals of the college program and the importance of the community group to the internship.

2. Request projects and tasks that are important to meeting community needs and ask the agency to list tasks that permit learning by the student.

3. Request that a specific person be designated as single contact for the group or agency so that on-site direction and responsibility for the intern be provided.

4. Once the project tasks and the community group person are identified, get the student, the group representative, and the college support person together. Their agenda should be:

   a. Negotiate specific tasks that meet community purposes. Determine measurable, time-specific objectives. (See Example 3.)

   b. Negotiate specific learning objectives for the student and other participants.

   c. Determine specific dates and time for student activity.

   d. Define supportive roles of the community group representative, the college counselor, and the internship broker (if any). Be sure that each participant understands the role of the others and that conference schedules are set.

   e. Determine when the student will attend seminars and workshops, with whom (i.e., other students), and what other variances from the work schedule may be needed.

   f. Determine reporting requirements of all participants; e.g., progress reports, final reports, diaries.

   g. Determine degree of student autonomy in executing the task and pursuing the learning objectives.

   h. Establish the rate of compensation, if any, and the means for its payment. (Remember that the person, agency, or group which pays the intern is generally seen as "owning" the program and the student.)

   i. Articulate collectively the training needs of participants. What do the faculty, the community group person, and the student need to learn or do before the experience? Here

the internship broker (from the college or academic consortium), if there is one, can function effectively.

j. Write a contract, including all specific agreements among participants. (See Example 4.)

STEP IV. CONDUCT OF PROGRAM.

Carry out plans as negotiated, but be flexible enough to allow for changes and alternative arrangements. A useful principle is: Keep options open.

STEP V. FOLLOW-UP.

Be prepared to assist students to follow up their work projects in whatever ways seem necessary.

Encourage and assist students to use their experiences throughout the academic period following their internships. Speaking to classes, attending seminars with interns from other programs, and participating in curriculum committee meetings are valuable opportunities to spread program benefits and expand involvement.

Involve former interns in planning and arranging future internship opportunities, training designs and evaluation procedures.

Example 1

CHECKLIST FOR BROKERS OR DEVELOPERS OF INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS:

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

1. Authority from president or dean of the college.
2. Clearly stated endorsement of academic credit for specified experiential learning from curriculum committee of the college.
3. Description of program:
   a. Goals (clearly set).
   b. Operations.
4. Application forms. (See Example 2.)
5. Project definition outline for community groups. (See Example 3. Under "5. Initial steps..." some useful activities might be providing orientation materials like background information on the organization and annual reports, having the student spend a day at the office looking around, letting the student attend meetings and a training workshop, or developing jointly a work plan.)
6. Sample contracts. (See Example 4.)
7. Training capability for faculty, community group person, and student.
8. Research component and someone to implement it.
9. Means for publicity about individuals and programs (press releases to hometown newspapers often used).
10. Tie-ins with national, regional, and state networks of resource persons for experiential education.
11. Time and energy to put it all together.

Example 2

SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR A STUDENT APPLICATION FORM

1. Basic biographical data.
   a. Name.
   b. Addresses and phones (both home and college).
   c. Birth date; sex; weight; height.
   e. Physical limitations; general health.
   f. Social Security number.
   g. Citizenship.
   h. Extracurricular interests.
   i. Skills, licenses, or other professional qualifications.
   j. Geographical areas deemed accessible; availability of own transportation.
2. One-page essay on why student wants a public-need-based service-learning internship. Student should rank order of his motivation among service to others, money, general interest, career exploration, or other.
3. Student's preferential ranking of type of internship: direct action, organizing, research.
4. Previous experience with service-learning. (Note: It would obviously be useful to develop means to assess the previous experiential learning of students, faculty, and other support personnel.)
5. References of faculty and previous employers.

Example 3

WORKSHEET FOR ORGANIZATIONS DEVELOPING PROJECTS
FOR SERVICE-LEARNING INTERNSHIPS

1. Suggested project title.

2. Objectives of the organization, department, or community group.

3. Ways in which a student might assist you in accomplishing some of these objectives. (Note specific tasks that the intern could do.)

4. Learning opportunities the project might offer a student intern.

5. Initial steps that would help prepare the student intern for meeting task and learning objectives.

Internship to begin by _____ and conclude _____

Intern's host agency colleague _____

Title:
Address: Phone:

Submitted by _____ Date _____

Example 4

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTS AND LEARNING CONTRACTS FOR SERVICE-LEARNING INTERNSHIPS

ADVANTAGES OF CONTRACTING

The independent contract is useful for the following reasons: (1) it is more practical for most agencies (and also in the interest of its interns) not to include interns in the regular employment agreement and payroll; (2) it is consistent with the nature and objectives of service-learning internships. Internships differ from standard employment since interns, unlike employees, are assigned short-term tasks on the basis of public needs and are not subject to all the considerations, such as job advancement, which may affect many employees' perceptions of their responsibility to an organization.

Service-learning internships provide opportunities for interns to serve public needs, to learn about public organizations, to develop service life-styles, to make sense out of their experience, to become more autonomous learners, and to come to grips with their own cultural values. The independent contractual agreement with the organization and the learning contract with the educational institution address these aspects of the service-learning experience.

The learning contract is useful for standard setting and evaluation of the learning that occurs in service-learning internships. Reporting requirements can often be the same for both the independent contract and the learning contract.

A. INDEPENDENT CONTRACT

Service-learning internships have generally been arranged by means of independent contracts through which an organization contracts with the intern to perform specific tasks within specific time limits and with specified financial and counseling support. Depending upon the customs and procedures of organizations, contracts can be developed for a particular style. Items to be covered in any contract include:

1. The parties.
2. Agreements of the sponsoring party to provide a task, supervision, financial support, and other agreed-upon provisions.
3. Agreement of the service-learning intern to perform specific tasks within specific time limits and other agreed-upon provisions.
4. Other terms and conditions that are mutually agreed upon, such as a condition that the intern shall in no way be regarded as an employee of the agency.

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Internship Contract between the Greater Tarheelia Chamber of Commerce and John Eager

1. The Greater Tarheelia Chamber of Commerce (hereinafter called "Host")

and John Eager (hereinafter called "Intern"), a student at Popular University, hereby agree to this internship contract.

2. Host will pay Intern a $1,000 stipend for producing between June 1, 19__, and September 1, 19__, a study of the nature and degree of support that the agency members of the Greater Tarheelia Chamber of Commerce give to higher education.

3. Host will provide for Intern during the specified dates adequate office space, one half-time secretarial assistant, necessary office supplies, and a telephone.

4. The executive director of Host will provide from time to time in-office counseling and assistance to Intern during the specified dates, and he or his appointee shall have at least one two-hour conference with Intern during each week of the internship.

5. Intern agrees that as his internship has as much an educational as a work aspect and as he may receive academic credit for the internship, he is not a regular employee of Host but an associate having no eligibility for such typical regular employee benefits as retirement pay, sick leave, paid vacation, and Workmen's Compensation.*

6. Both Host and Intern agree that all obligations of Intern to Popular University by reason of this internship will be honored and specifically that Intern shall be free to leave Host's offices if attendance at seminars or conferences related to the internship requires such absences.

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B. LEARNING CONTRACT

As there is a learning dimension to the service-learning internship design, a learning contract between the intern and his university should be negotiated outlining the specific learning objectives of the internship experience. This agreement can be part of the independent contract with the host agency.

Learning objectives for an internship can vary greatly in style and, thus, help an intern grow in ways not possible at the student's campus. The objectives set forth in provision 8 below reflect an intern's interest in subject matter, but they might have shown educational goals of skill development as in interview technique or self-awareness as in perceptions of cultural intercourse between intern and host agency colleagues. The ones used in the contract were chosen for their ready compatibility with academic resources and procedures of the intern's university.

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*Some internship contracts specifically include some of these benefits, especially Workmen's Compensation.

Learning Contract between Popular University,

John Eager, and Ralph Footenote

1. Popular University (hereinafter called "University"), John Eager (hereinafter called "Intern"), and Ralph Footenote (hereinafter called "Adviser"), hereby agree to this learning contract.

2. Any provisions of any internship contract between The Greater Tarheelia Chamber of Commerce (hereinafter called "Host") and Intern are hereby incorporated by reference.

3. University agrees that Intern is eligible to earn academic credit through this internship and learning contract; that the amount of credit shall be determined by Adviser; but that the credit shall not exceed ___ credit hours.*

4. Intern agrees that he will pay for each credit hour earned hereby at the rate he would for units earned through the Summer School of Popular University.**

5. Intern agrees that the University grading system shall apply and that Adviser shall be the faculty counselor and evaluator of the internship.

6. Adviser agrees to accept Intern's study for Host as one of two bases for Adviser's evaluating Intern's performance.

7. Adviser stipulates that the other basis of evaluation shall be analysis by the Intern of the approximation of his own learning objectives.

8. Intern sets forth the following learning objectives:

   a. To discern the attitudes of members of the Greater Tarheelia Chamber of Commerce toward higher education.

   b. To discover among these members any correlation between educational background and community awareness and involvement.

   c. To discover among these members any correlation between educational background and the economic power structure of Tarheelia.

9. Adviser stipulates that Intern shall meet with him once every other week of the internship for two hours to review Intern's efforts. At least half of these conferences shall take place at Host's offices.

10. Adviser stipulates the study for Host and final analysis of progress toward Intern's learning objectives shall be in writing, of no prescribed length, and presented personally by Intern on October 1, 19__, to Adviser.

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*Colleges in North Carolina have awarded anywhere from one to 15 credit hours for internships.

**Some learning contracts provide reduced tuition rates; others eliminate tuition altogether. Both alternatives can be considered in-kind contributions for federal funding conditions.